



Association of Bay Area Governments
Bay Area Air Quality Management District
Bay Conservation and Development Commission
Metropolitan Transportation Commission

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JOINT POLICY COMMITTEE

Friday, November 16, 2007
10:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon
MetroCenter Auditorium
101 Eighth Street, Oakland

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Joint Policy Committee Meeting Minutes of September 21, 2007 Action
3. Regional Transportation Plan—Policy Choices Discussion
On October 26th, ABAG and MTC held a joint General Assembly / Regional Transportation Plan Summit with about 700 people in attendance. Staff will summarize the analysis presented at this meeting, the comments received in breakout sessions and through comment forms, and the results of a public opinion poll. Based on this information, the Committee will begin a discussion of policy to guide the 2035 RTP.
4. Public Comment
5. Adjournment

NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING:

10:00 a.m. to Noon
Friday, January 18, 2008
MetroCenter Auditorium
101 Eighth Street, Oakland

The JPC may take action on any item listed in the agenda.

This meeting is scheduled to end promptly at 12:00 Noon. Agenda items not considered by that time may be deferred.

The public is encouraged to comment on agenda items by completing a request-to-speak card and giving it to JPC staff or the chairperson.

Although a quorum of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission may be in attendance at this meeting, the Joint Policy Committee may take action only on those matters delegated to it. The Joint Policy Committee may not take any action as the Metropolitan Transportation Commission unless this meeting has been previously noticed as a Metropolitan Transportation Commission meeting.



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JOINT POLICY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting of September 21, 2007
Held at 10:00 AM in the Cathedral Hill Hotel, San Francisco

Attendance:

ABAG

Dave Cortese
Mark Green
Scott Haggerty
Rose Jacobs Gibson

BAAQMD

Chris Daly
John Gioia
Jerry Hill
Mark Ross, Chair
Pamela Torliatt
Gayle B. Uilkema

BCDC*

Jim Bourgart
Charles McGlashen
Dena Mossar

*non-voting

MTC

Tom Bates
Bill Dodd
Sue Lempert
Jon Rubin
Jim Spering
Ken Yeager

1. Call to Order

Chair Ross called the meeting to order.

2. Approval of the Joint Policy Committee Meeting Minutes of July 20, 2007

The Minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

3. Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and pricing policy

Steve Heminger provided a slide presentation which updated the Committee on the RTP targets and introduced the policy issue of congestion pricing. His presentation is available on the JPC website: http://www.abag.ca.gov/jointpolicy/jpc_presentations.

A rich discussion covered a number of ideas:

- There is a need to get beyond abstract concepts to tangible demonstration projects so that people can judge through real experience whether pricing works or not. Fear of the unknown contributes to a reluctance to change. The Alameda Hot Lanes project and the Doyle Drive toll project were cited as near-term opportunities to prove the concept. Spare the Air days were suggested as temporary opportunities to increase tolls for good purpose, and the possibility of a pilot project leading to a regional referendum was identified.
- The equity issue is critical. There needs to be discounts, exemptions, or exceptions for low-income people as well as the provision of plentiful alternative choices (e.g. more close-in housing and more transit).

- A complete pricing policy will have a number of complementary elements: hot lanes, cordon pricing, parking surcharges, fuel fees, and perhaps even general road usage charges. The most effective of these will vary by time of day or level of congestion to motivate behavior which makes most efficient use of a finite shared resource.
- In addition to pricing to moderate peak period daily commutes, we need to recognize that localized weekend congestion is a growing problem. Pricing to influence discretionary leisure travel is also required, and may be effective in reducing some of the traffic concerns which lead people to oppose additional residential development.
- Capacity will be a limiting factor in making congestion pricing truly effective. At some point we may have to seriously consider converting mixed-flow lanes to HOT lanes in order to maximize person-moving capacity within confined corridors, to extend the benefits of congestion pricing throughout the region and balance traffic demand among corridors.
- The perception that pricing is just another revenue grab is a pervasive one, so the intrinsic benefits of pricing need to be crystal clear. It may be possible in some cases demonstrate how pricing and delay avoidance could contribute to overall lower costs.
- Prices need to keep pace with inflation and it may be appropriate to build COLA into the pricing regimen from the beginning. Some guarantee against outrageous price increases may also be helpful in gaining support for the concept, but we need to be cautious about absolutely capping increases in case significant new revenue is required to deal with, for example, emergency reconstruction.
- It may be very difficult to get a total pricing schema that works if we have to piecemeal it through individual *ad hoc* legislative authorities. We should seek general legislative authority to pursue a pricing strategy in the Bay Area.

4. FOCUS: Priority Development Area (PDA) Designations

Ken Kirkey summarized the staff report on the PDAs. He noted that about fifty jurisdictions had submitted PDA applications, totaling over 100 actual areas. Together the PDAs are conservatively estimated to accommodate about 400,000 housing units, or about 45 percent of the projected regional growth to 2035. He also noted that PDA implementation would require assistance; capital budgets submitted with about two-thirds of the PDA applications total \$24 billion.

During public comment, a representative of the City of Newark objected to the implied tiering of PDAs into “planned” and “potential.”

After discussion, it was moved and seconded, and it was the decision of the Committee:

- A. THAT the Joint Policy Committee endorse the list of planned and potential PDAs for presentation at the ABAG/MTC Fall Forum on October 26th and for adoption by the ABAG Executive Board on November 15th.
- B. THAT the Joint Policy Committee endorse a recommendation to the ABAG Executive Board that staff be empowered to move a PDA from the potential to planned category immediately upon the completion of the applicable plan and resolution.

5. FOCUS: Priority Conservation Area (PCA) Nominations

Ken Kirkey brought the Committee up to date on the PCA process, which is proceeding in parallel but slightly behind the PDA process. Priority Conservation Areas are intended to be short-term priorities for acquisition or easement. Nominations have been received for over 100 PCAs, though this number may decline significantly with the application of eligibility criteria.

Discussion focused in particular on a nomination in San Mateo County: the Redwood City Bayfront Tidal Plain. Committee members and speakers during the public comment period criticized the process which led to this area's nomination and its inclusion on the list of nominated areas. Among the concerns were the lack of a clear definition for the "consensus" criterion, the acceptance of nominations from groups other than governmental entities, an inadequate public notice of the nomination procedure and meetings at which the nominations were vetted, and inadequate respect for uncompleted local planning processes currently underway. Staff reminded the Committee that staff will be evaluating each nomination relative the criteria, which will be interpreted conservatively, and that many nominations will likely not be recommended for PCA status.

Committee members also suggested that:

- PCAs adjacent to urban growth boundaries ought to be accorded special priority status;
- Some areas already protected by zoning do not require acquisition or easement to protect;
- Sea-level rise should be a consideration in coastal areas considered for conservation;
- The conservation objective needs to be explicitly weighed against the region's affordable housing objective. We should not be conserving areas at the expense

of housing affordability or pushing housing demand into even more sensitive areas surrounding the region.

6. Public Comment

All public comment was received relative to specific agenda items and is incorporated in the summary of those items.

7. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:20 PM.



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JOINT POLICY COMMITTEE — REGIONAL PLANNING PROGRAM

Date: November 8, 2007
To: Joint Policy Committee
From: Ted Droettboom, Regional Planning Program Director
Subject: Regional Transportation Plan—Policy Choices

On October 26th, ABAG and MTC held a joint General Assembly and Transportation Plan Summit at the Oakland Marriott Hotel. The meeting addressed the challenges and choices facing the Bay Area over the next quarter century with a concentration on the 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). About 700 people attended and reacted to a staff analysis of investment and policy choices relative to a set of performance targets, a panel discussion of critical issues, and a presentation of preliminary public polling results.

At the November 16th JPC, staff will reprise the highlights of their analysis, provide more information on the public-opinion poll and summarize feedback received at the Oakland meeting through the panel discussion, breakout sessions and comment forms. A copy of the PowerPoint presentation outlining the staff analysis is available at:

http://www.mtc.ca.gov/meetings/events/forum/Summit_Challenges_Choices.ppt.

The principal planning innovation suggested for the 2035 RTP is the introduction of explicit, quantitative targets against which to assess plan performance. In summary, the staff analysis concludes that our provisional performance targets will be very difficult to achieve. This is particularly the case for the targets related to greenhouse gases and particulate matter. Pricing and land use can help us greatly reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per capita. However, when we factor in population growth, the best we can do is about one-half of our emission target. And that requires our highest-performing infrastructure package coupled with very aggressive land-use changes and pricing policies.

Targets related to congestion relief and affordability/equity are somewhat more attainable. Cost-effective freeway operation investments take us to about fifty percent of our congestion target and aggressive land-use and pricing options take us the rest of the way. The policy-based land-use assumptions already built into our transportation plan nearly achieve our affordability objective, though the pricing scenario wipes out the affordability improvements achieved through land use.

Pricing and land-use generally outperform infrastructure investments in moving us toward our targets. However, both the pricing and land-use scenarios are very ambitious relative to present practice. The pricing scenario, for example, increases the cost of driving by about five times.

Further there does not seem to be a great deal of public and political support for pricing alternatives. A particularly important issue, even among pricing supporters, is dealing with the substantial equity issues associated with higher transportation costs. More intense land-use also enjoys only partial support, and the fiscal resources required to achieve land-use change are sorely lacking.

Additional options are potentially available to help us close the gaps between our infrastructure investments, our potential policies and our targets. These include improvements in vehicle and fuel technology, telecommuting and other transportation demand strategies, pricing discounts, and general changes in travel attitudes and behaviors. However, none of these will be easy either.

Within this challenging context, staff is seeking the Joint Policy Committee's guidance in refining the policy basis for the 2035 RTP. That refinement will likely occur over more than a few JPC meetings. Staff will be raising a number of specific questions and policy choices over the course of their presentations to the Committee, and we anticipate an active discussion. In preparation for the first meeting, we suggest the JPC members think about their response to four general questions which encompass and underlie many of the more detailed issues which confront the 2035 Transportation Plan:

1. After observing how difficult it will be to achieve our provisional targets and how good intentions can be misinterpreted and abused, should we continue to break new ground by constructing the next RTP on a performance basis?
2. Noting that pricing can be a powerful short-term tool for addressing our climate-change objectives and for funding many improvements, but that there are significant obstacles to public acceptability and significant equity challenges to be overcome, how should we introduce pricing in this plan?
3. With the knowledge that land-use changes can also be very helpful over the longer term in reducing VMT and hence both greenhouse gases and ground-level pollutants, but that there is also significant community resistance to infill and redevelopment, how should we use the funding and investment packages in the transportation plan to support priority development areas and encourage more focused growth?
4. In the context of the plan's provisional targets and information about the relative effectiveness of infrastructure investments in achieving those targets, what principles should we employ to structure planned and potential infrastructure packages so as to have maximum impact for the dollars invested?